

FIRST
COMICS
DELUXE SERIES

MAY \$1.75
NO. 23
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BADGER



WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?



The Badger is **Norbert Sykes**, a Vietnam veteran suffering from an extremely rare multiple personality disorder, which has its origins in childhood trauma. Seven great personalities in one. The personality most frequently inhabited by Norbert, indeed almost *exclusively preferred*, is the Badger, a self-styled crime fighter who rides the highways and by-ways of America, meting out bloody justice to jaywalkers, ticket scalpers, indifferent teenaged fast food clerks, in fact, *any damn body he feels like because he's CRAZY!*

Badger is an expert at hand-to-hand combat. He began his training in Shorin-ryu but has since gone on to master dozens of obscure, esoteric, arcane, martial arts, the likes of which you seldom hear about.

He can also talk to the animals — just like Dr. Doolittle, or Lorne Greene. Only Badger gets better results than Lorne Greene.

Badger lives with **Ham the Weather Wizard** in a castle south of Barneveld, Wisconsin. Ham and Badger met while both were inmates at a state mental hospital. He hired Badger as his bodyguard, and Badger's therapist, **Daisy Fields**, became Ham's personal secretary. Through cunning and chicanery, Ham has amassed a considerable fortune.

Having convinced Ham to reject the demons he once served, Badger has become the sworn enemy of **IBOB** — the International Brotherhood of Brujos. By sacrificing nearly extinct animals, IBOB rips apart the fabric of reality and allows hideous demons from other dimensions to enter the earthly plane...

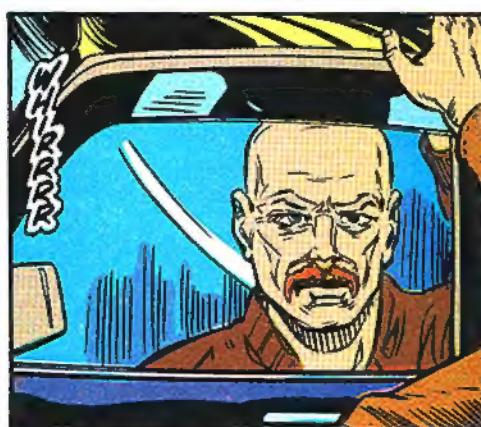
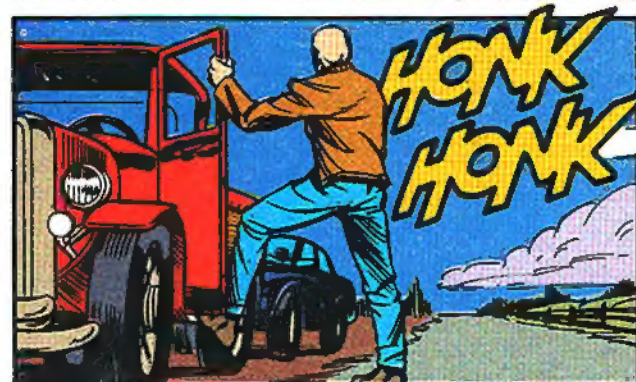
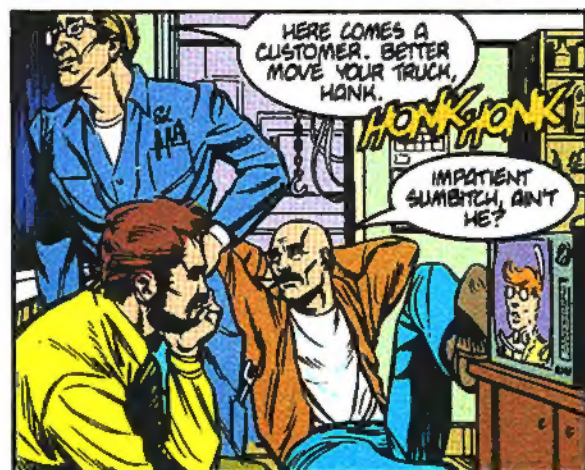
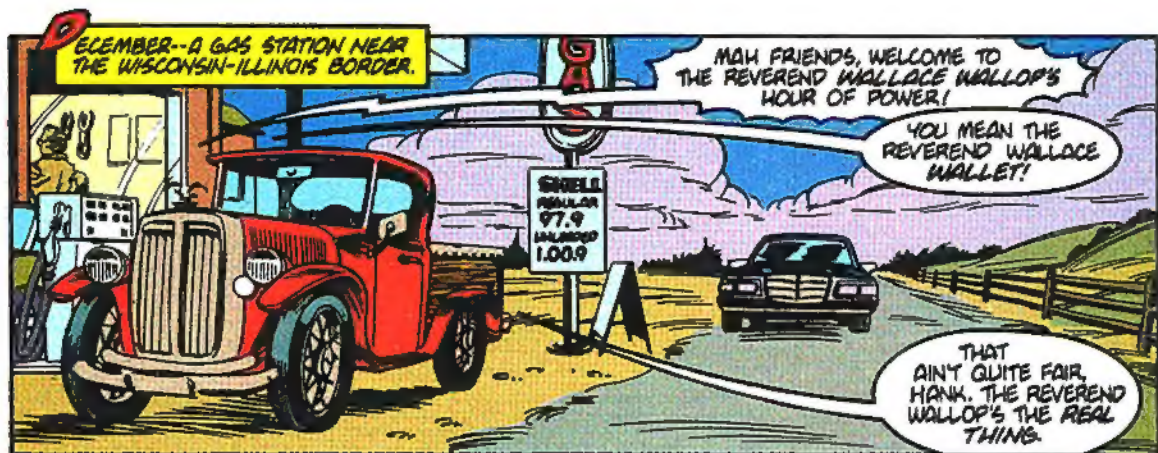
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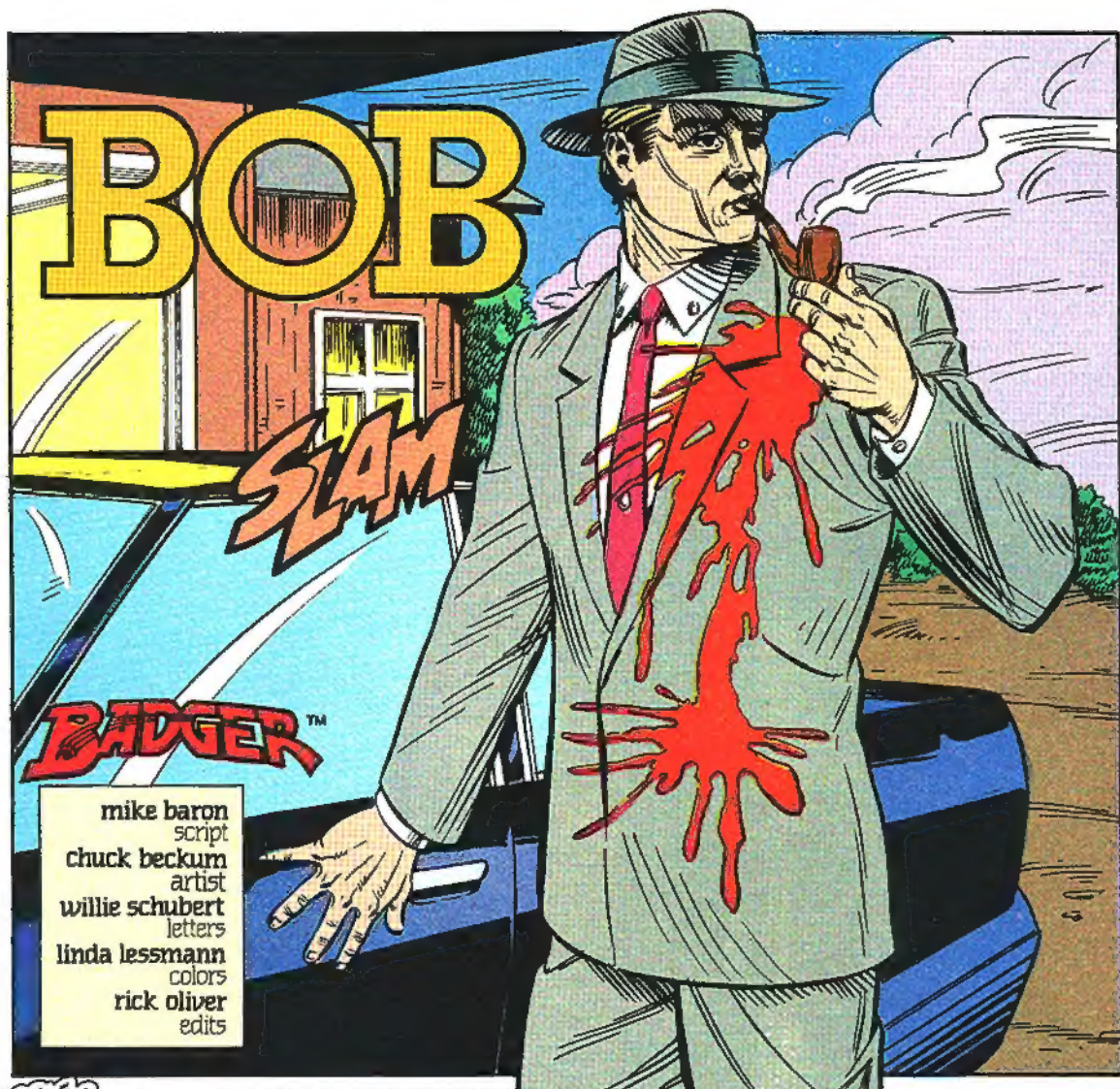
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A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

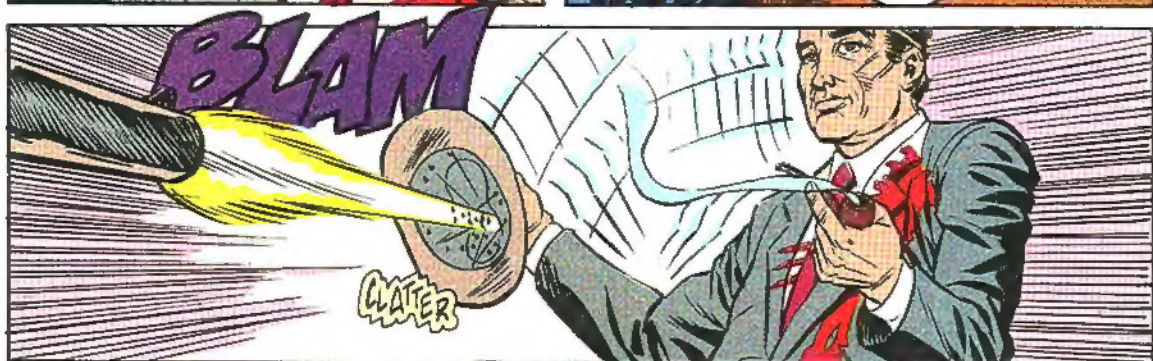
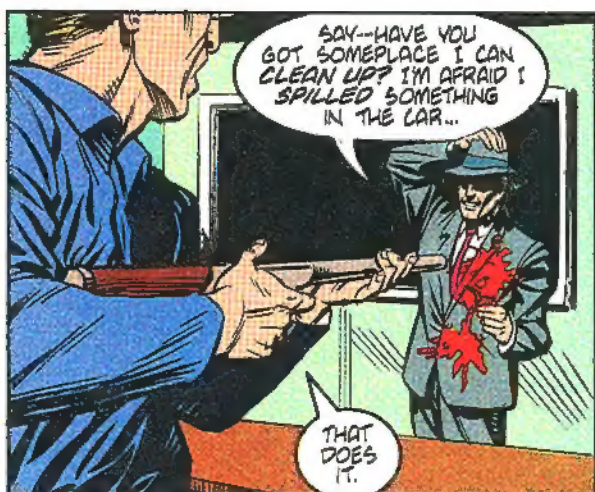
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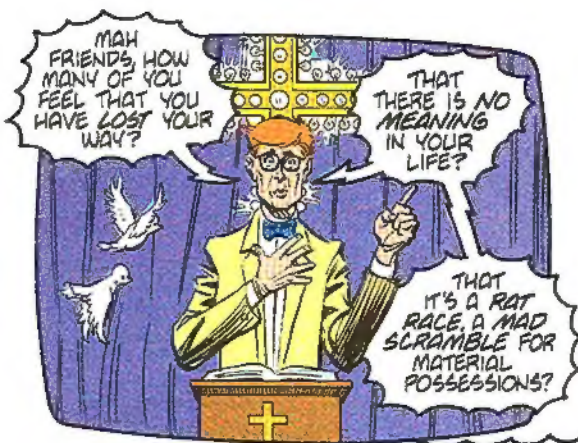




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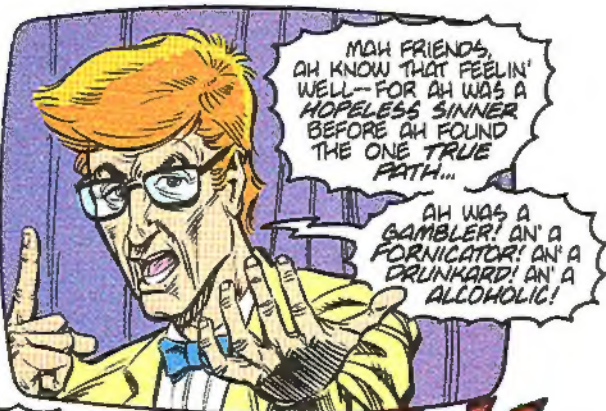




MAH FRIENDS, HOW MANY OF YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE LOST YOUR WAY?

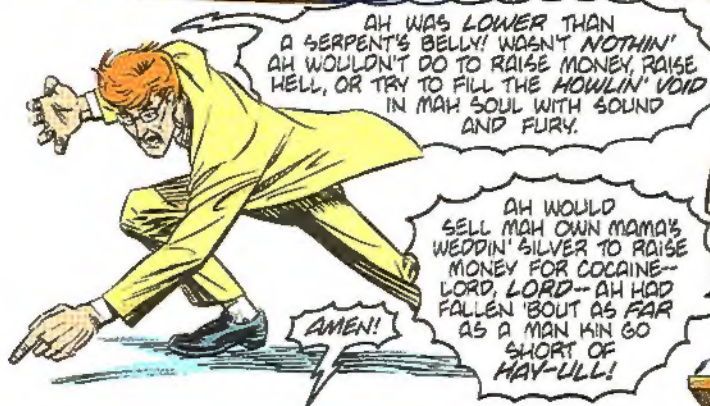
THAT THERE IS NO MEANING IN YOUR LIFE?

THAT IT'S A RAT RACE, A MAD SCRAMBLE FOR MATERIAL POSSESSIONS?



MAH FRIENDS, AH KNOW THAT FEELIN' WELL--FOR AH WAS A HOPELESS SINNER BEFORE AH FOUND THE ONE TRUE PATH...

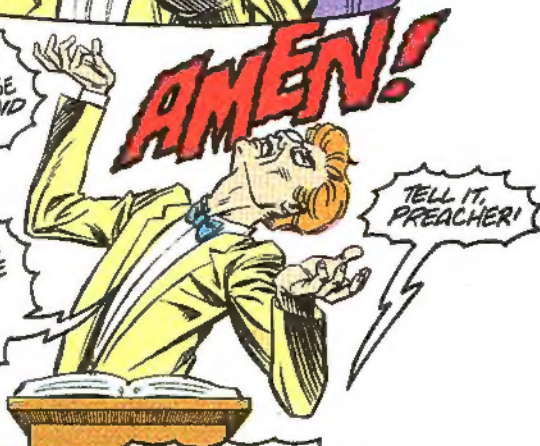
AH WAS A GAMBLER! AN' A FORNICATOR! AN' A DRUNKARD! AN' A ALCOHOLIC!



AH WAS LOWER THAN A SERPENT'S BELLY! WASN'T NOthin' AH WOULDN'T DO TO RAISE MONEY, RAISE HELL, OR TRY TO FILL THE HOWLIN' VOID IN MAH SOUL WITH SOUND AND FURY.

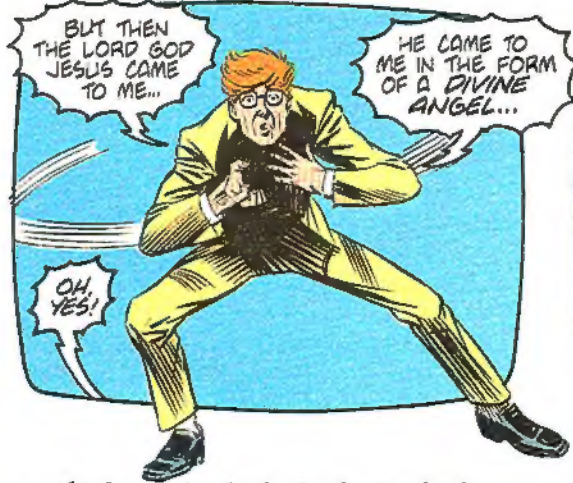
AH WOULD SELL MAH OWN MAMA'S WEDDIN' SILVER TO RAISE MONEY FOR COCAINE-- LORD, LORD-- AH HAD FALLEN 'BOUT AS FAR AS A MAN KIN GO SHORT OF MAY-ULL!

AMEN!



AMEN!

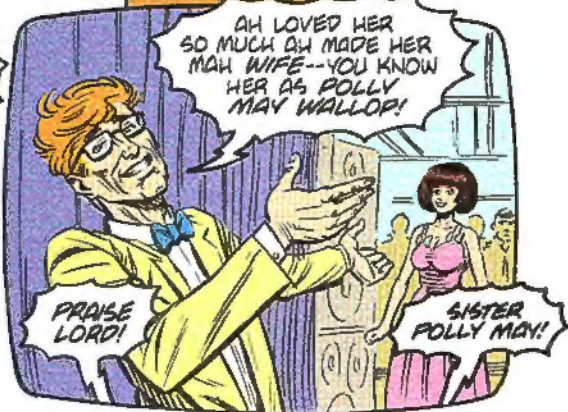
TELL IT, PREACHER!



BUT THEN THE LORD GOD JESUS CAME TO ME...

HE CAME TO ME IN THE FORM OF A DIVINE ANGEL...

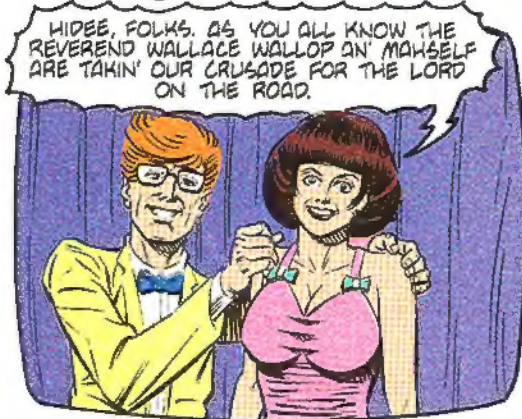
OH, YES!



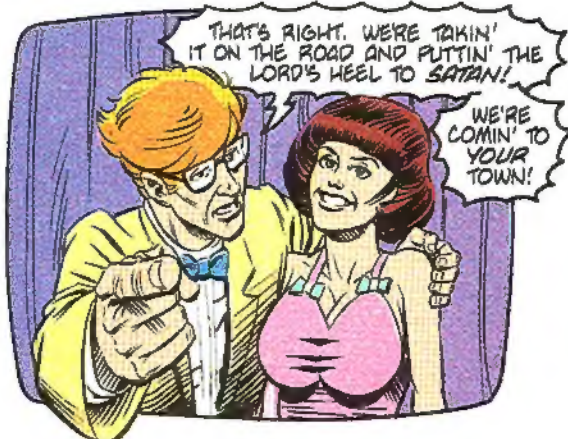
AH LOVED HER SO MUCH AH MADE HER MAH WIFE--YOU KNOW HER AS POLLY MAY WALLOP!

PRaise LORD!

SISTER POLLY MAY!

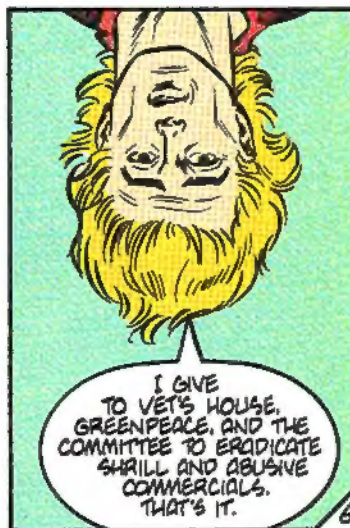
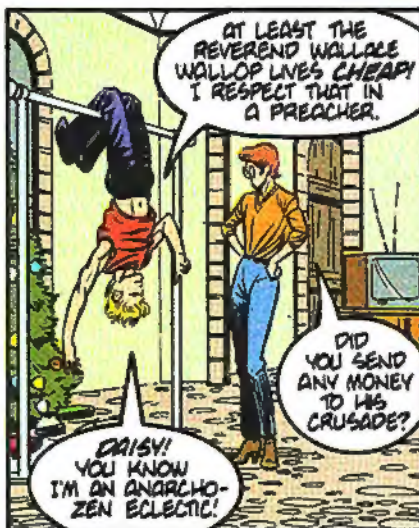
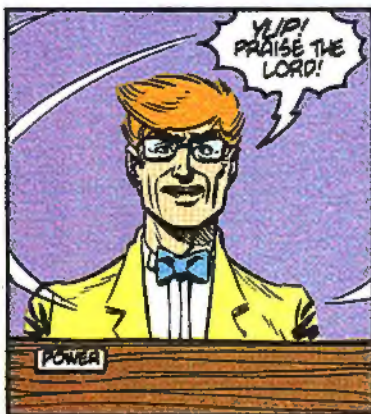
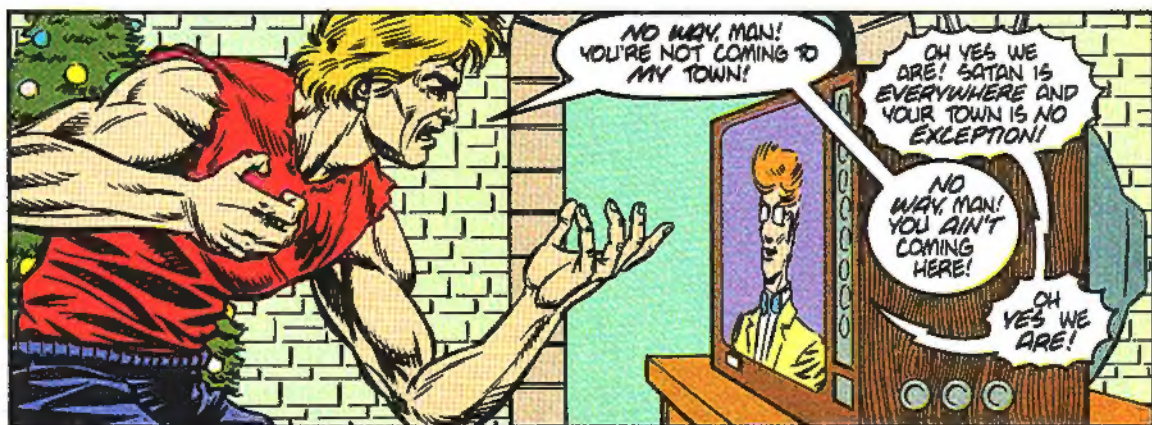


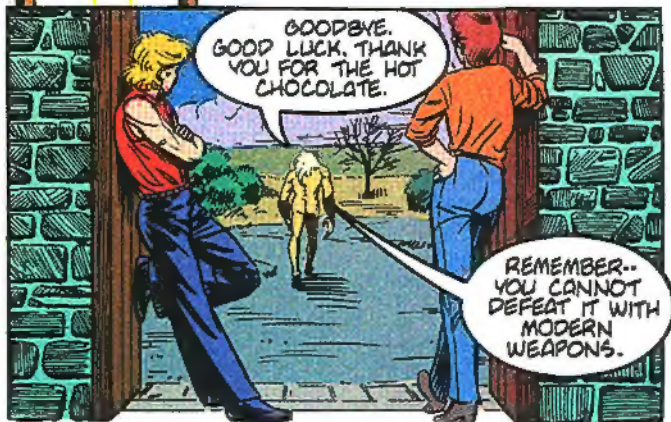
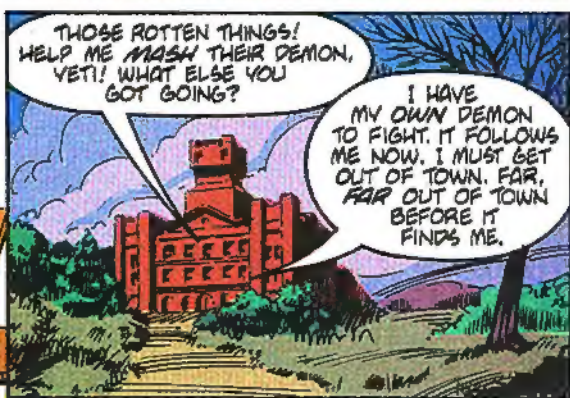
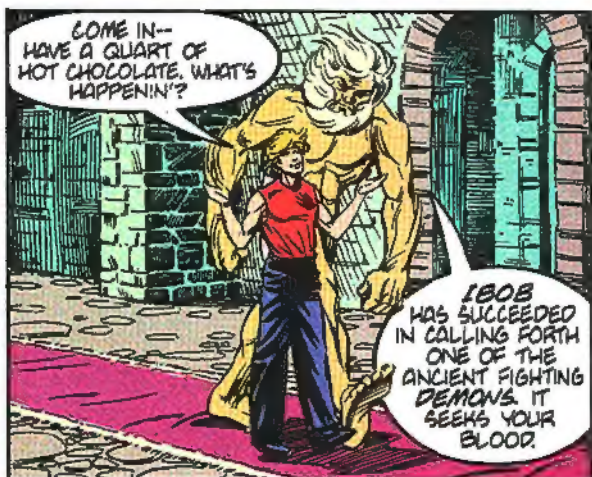
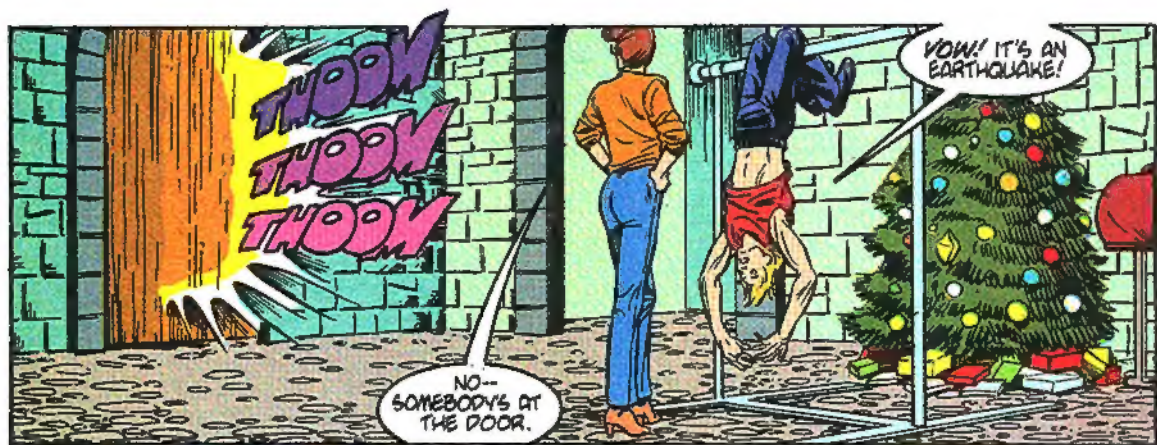
WIDEE, FOLKS, AS YOU ALL KNOW THE REVEREND WALLACE WALLOP AN' MAHSELF ARE TAKIN' OUR CRUSADE FOR THE LORD ON THE ROAD.

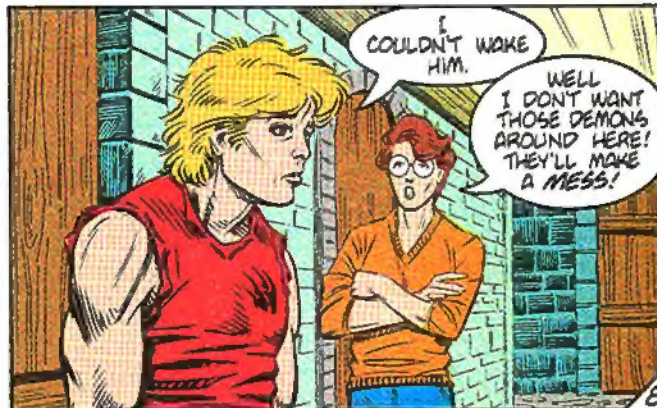
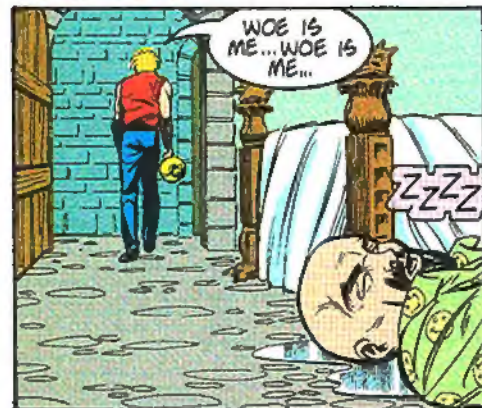
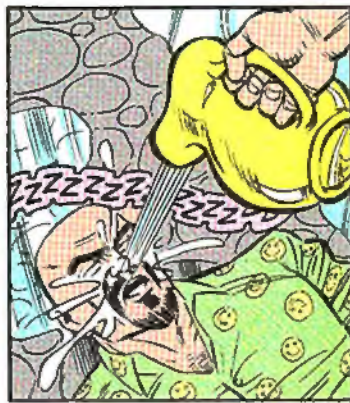
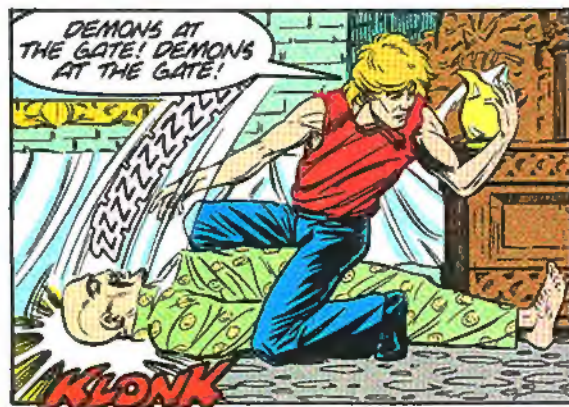
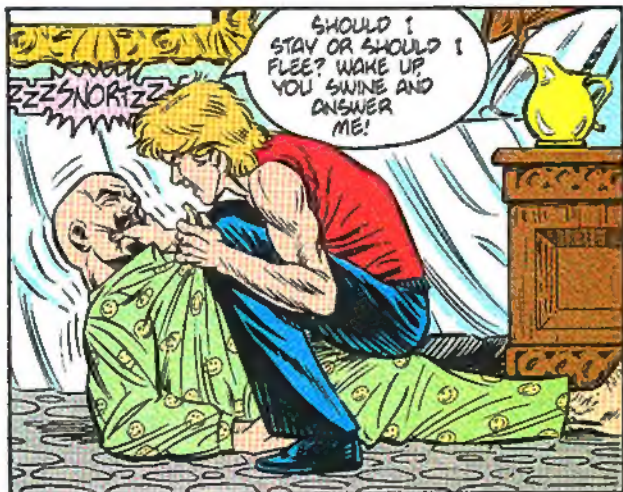
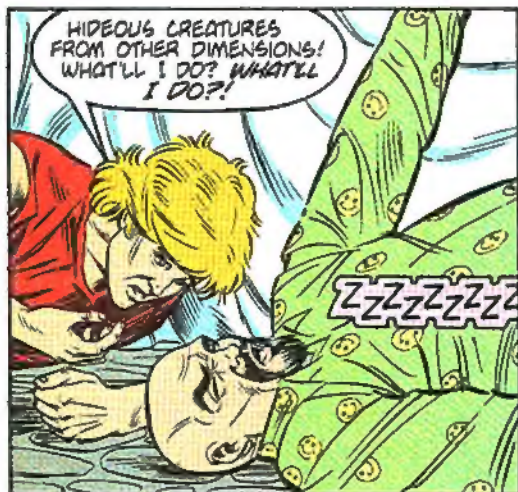
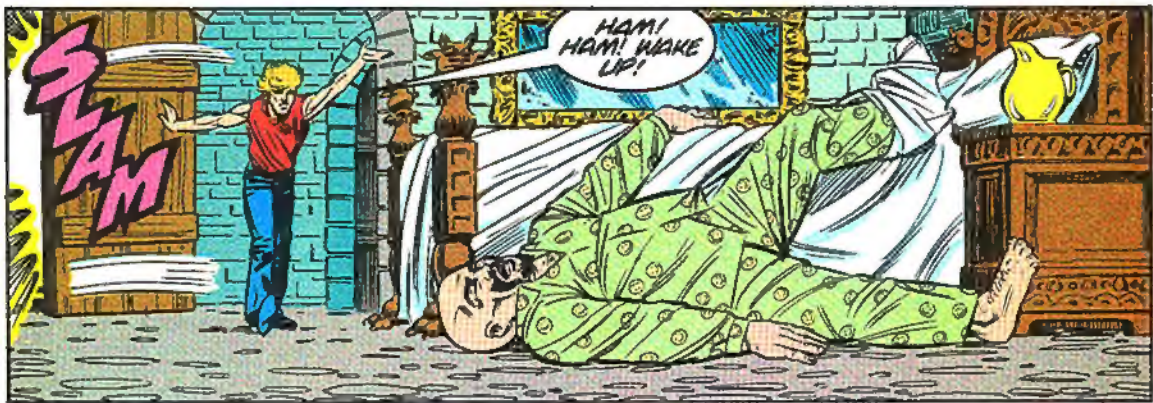


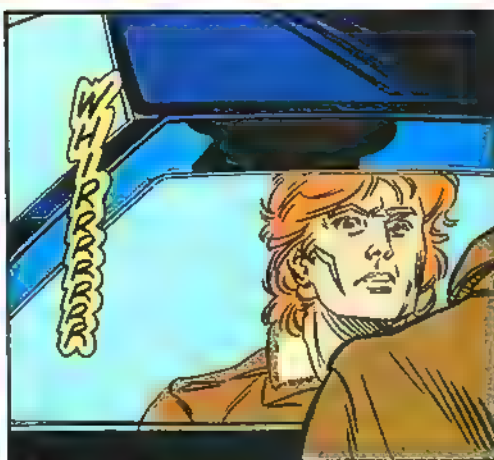
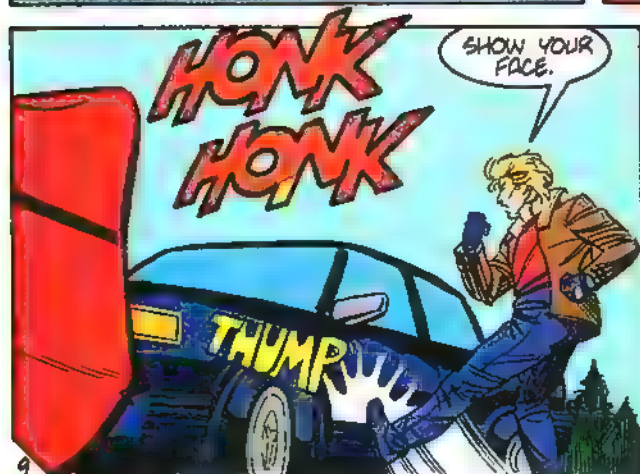
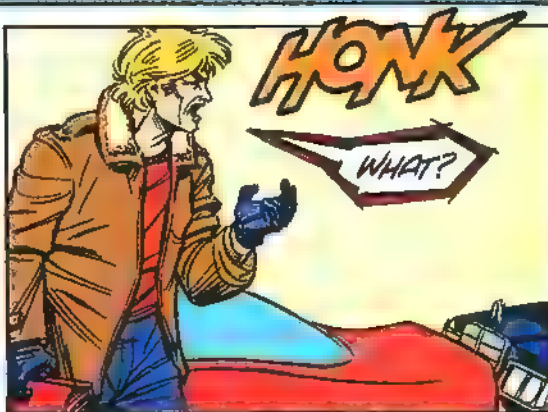
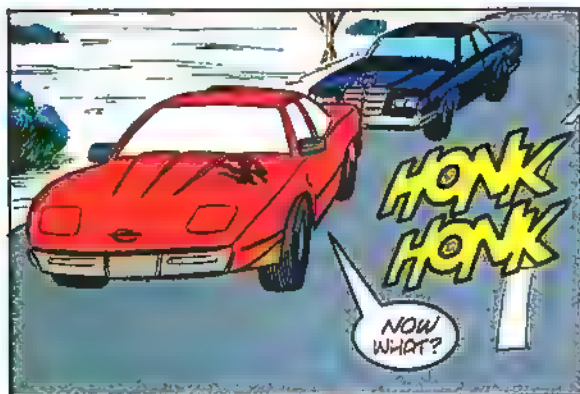
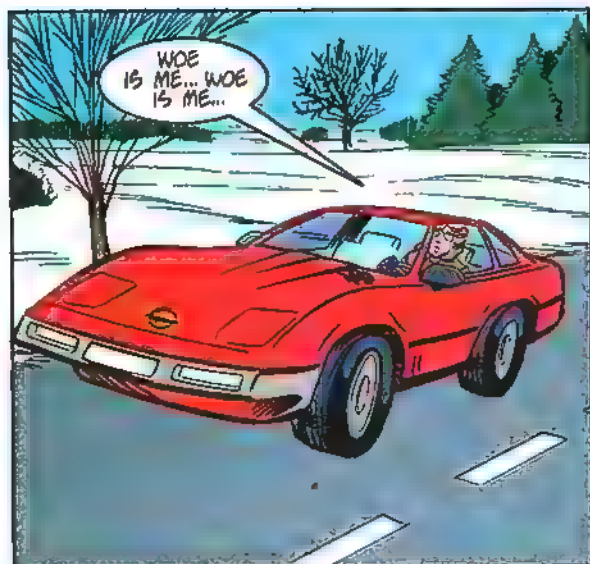
THAT'S RIGHT, WE'RE TAKIN' IT ON THE ROAD AND PUTTIN' THE LORD'S HEEL TO SATAN!

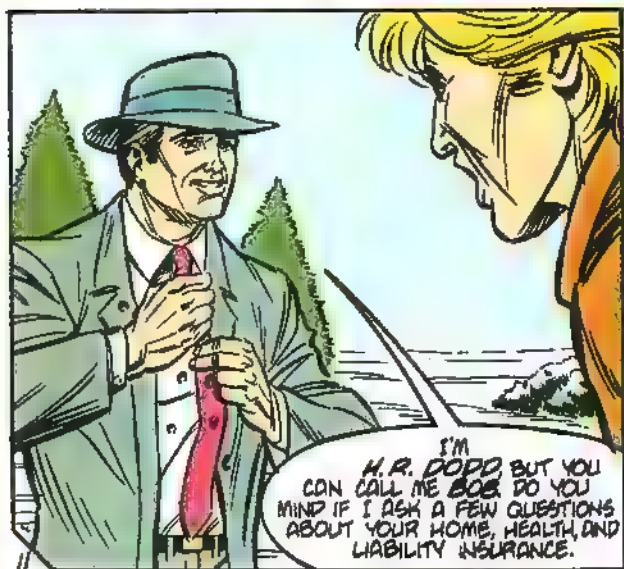
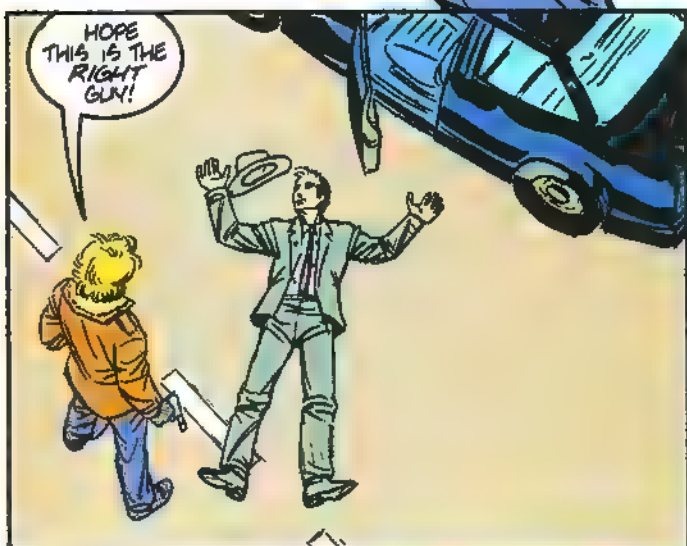
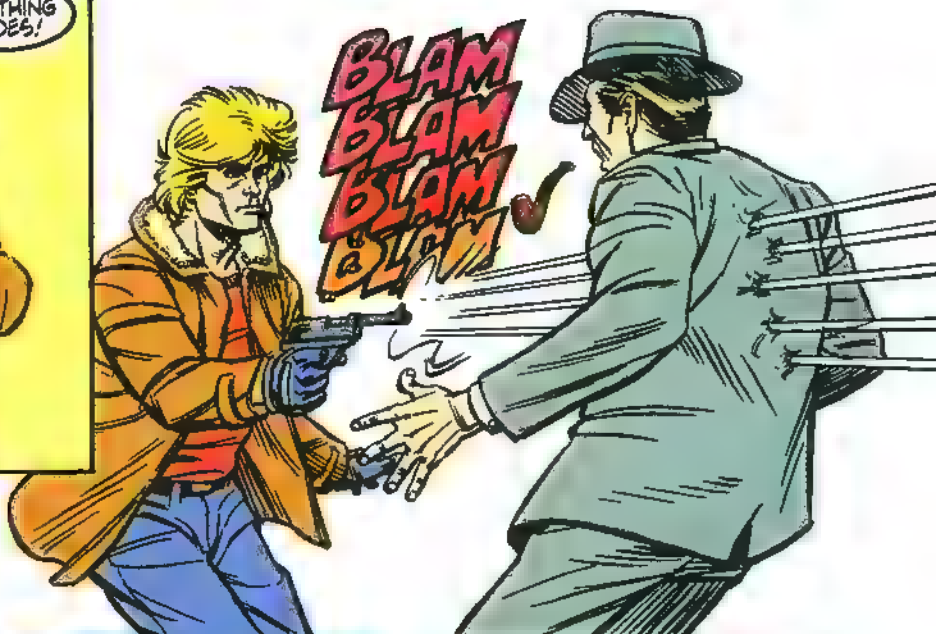
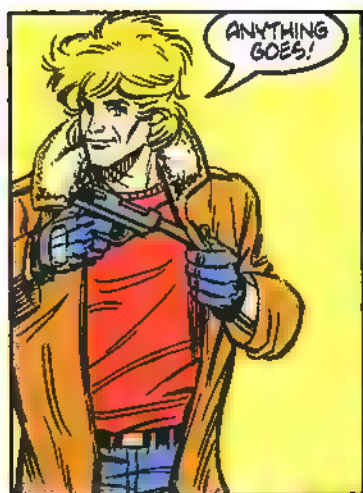
WE'RE COMIN' TO YOUR TOWN!

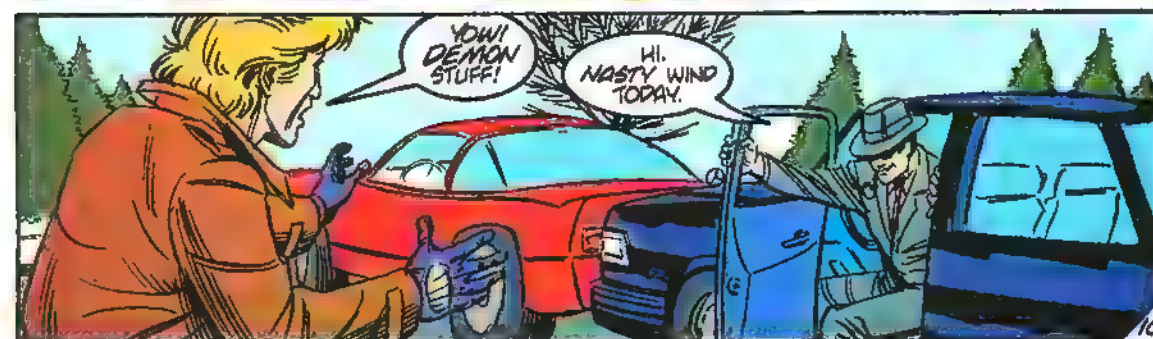
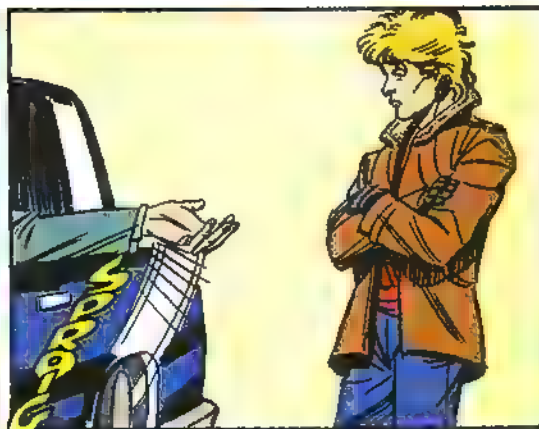
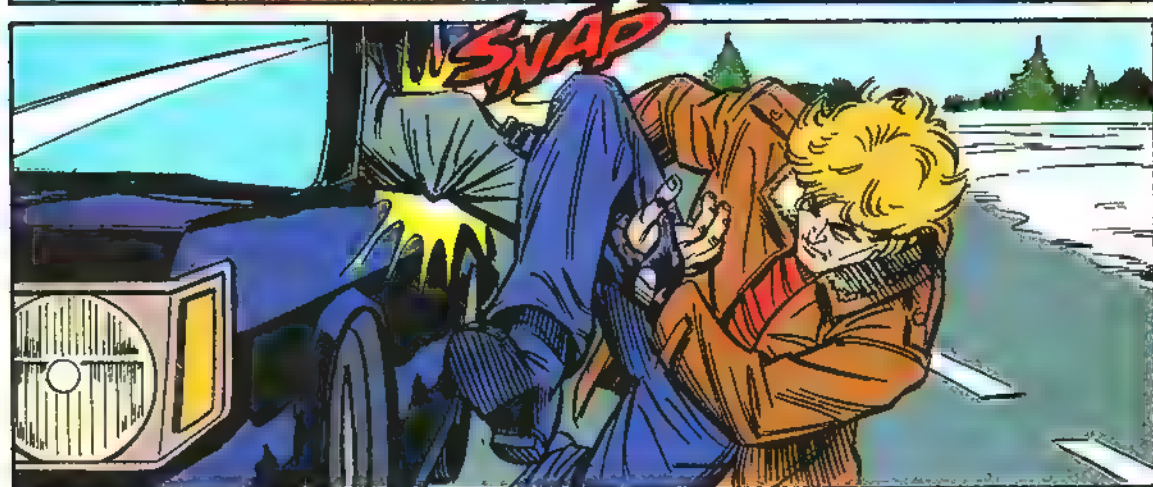
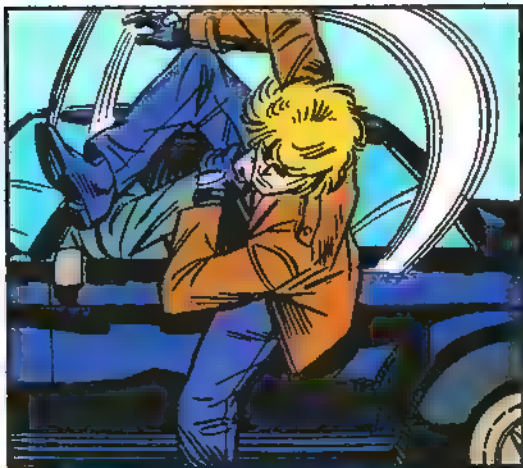
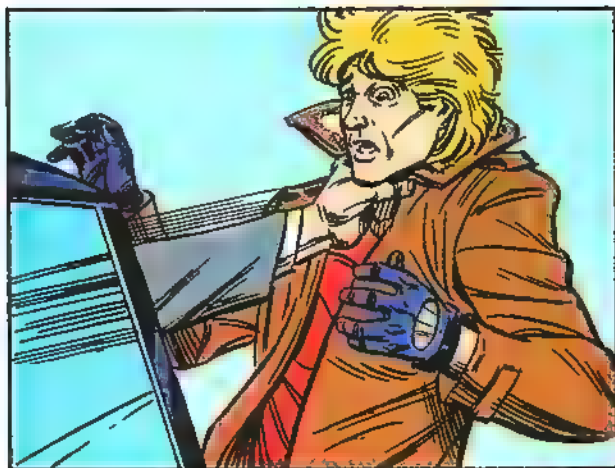












FIRST NOTES

This column is incredibly late this month; so theoretically it should be chock full of late-breaking, up-to-date news flashes. Theoretically. Unfortunately, I have absolutely no idea what's going on, so if you were hoping to get some useful information -- or just idle gossip -- you might as well skip down to the "First in January" section or go pick up a copy of the *Weekly World News*. You and the two guys who keep writing me letters threatening to blow off my kneecaps if I don't stop trying to be funny.

There is a reason why this column is both tardy and inordinately confusing. It is not an EXCUSE. It is a REASON. I don't know what the difference is, but numerous highly talented individuals have assured me on countless occasions that there is, indeed, a difference. What is the reason? Well it is *not* any of the following:

- 1) The dog ate my word processor
- 2) I put it in the mail yesterday. I can't imagine what happened to it. Chicago, Illinois? Oh no! I sent it to Chicago, Montana!
- 3) Nobody told me what day it was; so I didn't even know it was late

Excuse me. Just a little fame for humor. Yes, well now that we've all had a good chuckle, let's get down to business. The REASON this column is so unbelievably late that they had to rip the comics apart after they had been printed, bound, and packed just to insert this one lousy page that has nothing to do with the story you paid good money for? Here it is: I've been kind of... busy. That's it. I'm sorry. It's all I could come up with on short notice.

Let me explain. Every time I sit down to write this column, something comes up. Or more specifically, someone gets up. And she needs a lot of attention. Mostly she just wants to dance. Right now we're dancing to Dire Straits. Before that it was Dave Edmunds and Moon Martin. Yesterday it was Talking Heads and Little Feat.

I guess I'm just a sucker for a pretty face. Someday I'll end up on the cover of

some sleazy tabloid, a victim of my own pathetic vices. But I can't help myself. She has such beautiful eyes. And ears. And fingers. And toes. And I can only write this thing in bits and snatches in between songs while she dozes off. But before you know it, she's up again and raring to go.

Maybe she'll grow out of it. I don't know. It's kind of hard to tell right now I've only been hanging around with her for a couple weeks -- because before that she wasn't around at all. Because she's only two weeks old. She's my daughter, Kendall. She was brought into this world by my wife, Jade, who exerted more superhuman strength than you'll ever see in a comic book. I'm in awe of her courage and beauty. And now I'm in love with two women.

For what it's worth, this one's for you, Kendall and Jade.

(Now try to come up with an illustration to go with that, Alex "Art Director" Wald!)

American Flagg! #40: Reuben, Raul, and Luther leave Chicago behind as they head out in search of America. But they soon discover the Plex is with them wherever they go. By J. M. DeMatteis, Mark Badger and Randy Emberlin. And the last Bob Violence story -- really! By Steven Grant and Norm Breyfogle.

Badger #23: Guest artist Chuck Beckum joins Mike Baron as IBOB sends a hideous demon from another dimension to slice and dice the Badger. But help sometimes comes from the strangest places... And Clonezone by Baron and Mark A. Nelson. Deluxe series.

The Chronicles of Corum #3: Corum is given a longed for and deadly gift -- the Eye of Rhynn and the Hand of Kwl. But all gifts have a hidden price. By Mike Baron, Mike Mignola and Kelley Jones. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Dreadstar #30: The culmination of more than thirty issues -- the final showdown between Vanth Dreadstar and the Lord Papal! Who will win, who will die and who will be changed forever. By Jim Starlin. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

Dynamo Joe #7: Sigma Base has been captured and there's only one option left -- blow it up! But Daro, Pomru, and Dynamo Joe have another idea. By Phil Foglio, Doug Rice and Brian Thomas. And Cargonauts by Foglio and Paul Gulnan.

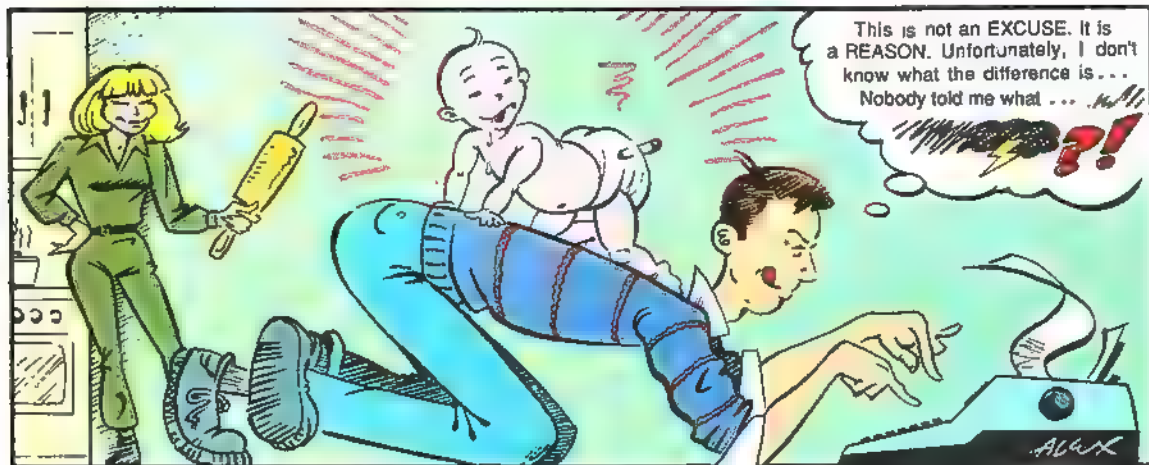
Evangeline #1: The premiere issue in the First and definitive version of one of the most sought-after comics of the '80s. Judith Hunt and Charles Dixon bring their brilliant creative efforts to First Comics for the all-new, deluxe adventures of Evangeline.

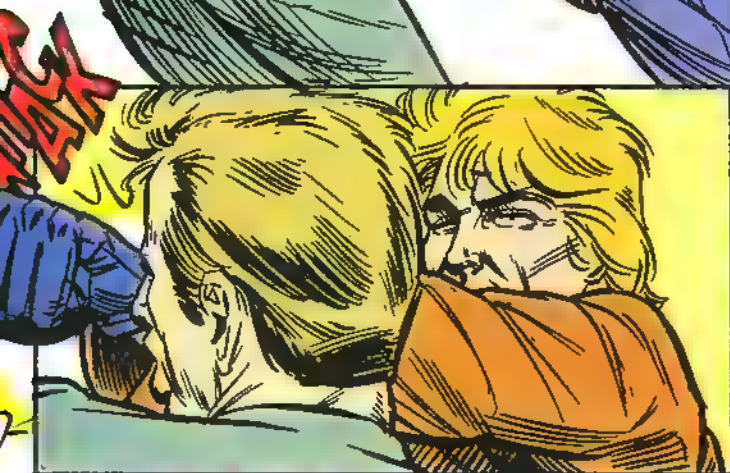
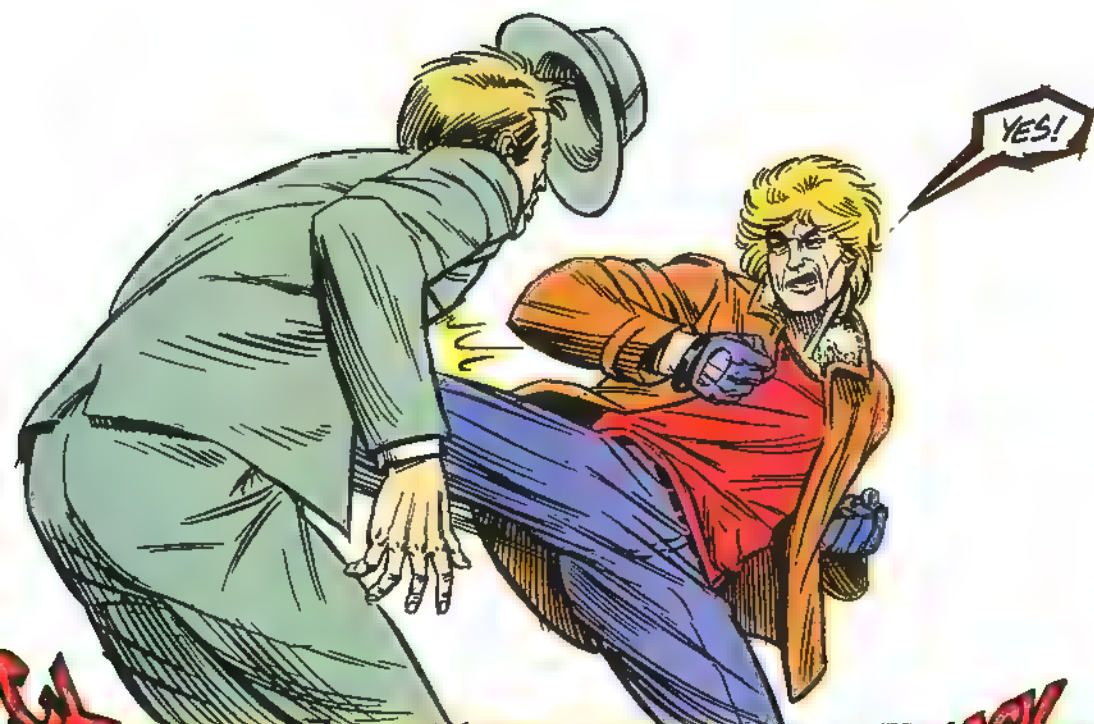
Grimjack #34: What can Gaunt do when Spook's lust for revenge on her murderer is stronger than even the memory of love? By John Ostrander and Tom Mandrake. Special full-length issue.

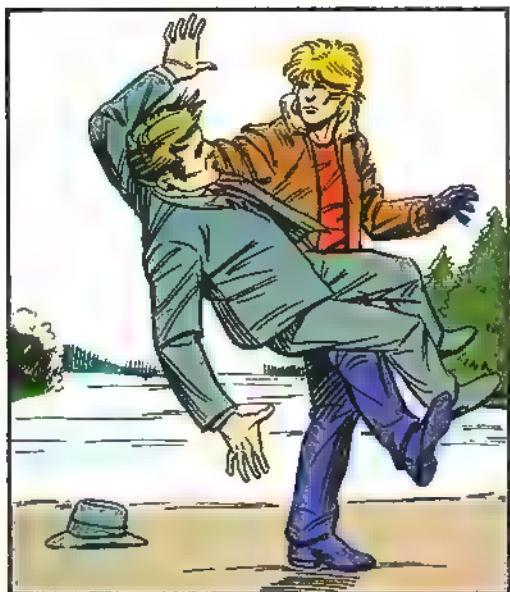
Hawkmoon: The Mad God's Amulet #3: Dorian Hawkmoon's betrothed has been kidnapped, and Hawkmoon discovers that the Mad God has powers beyond what any suspect. By Gerry Conway, Rafael Kayanan and Rico Rival. Deluxe, bi-monthly series.

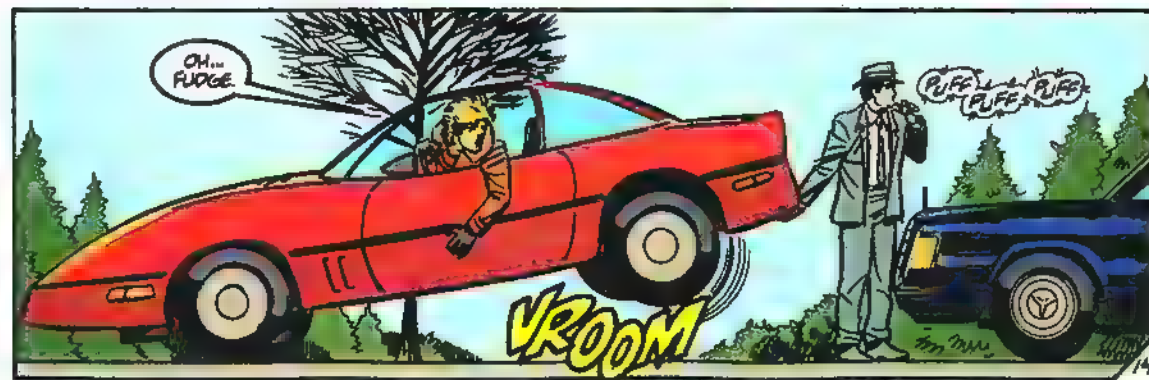
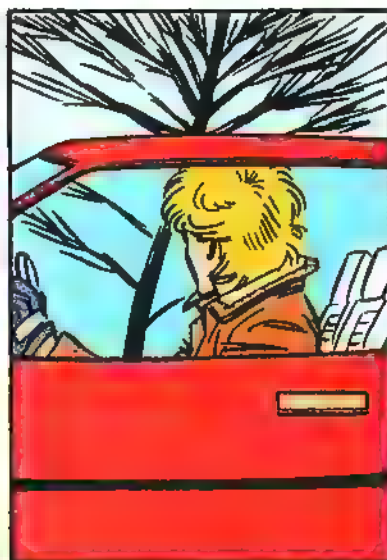
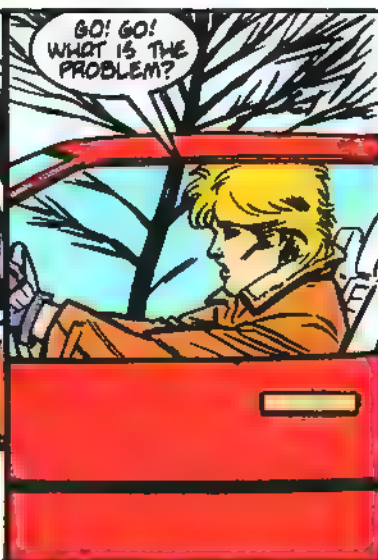
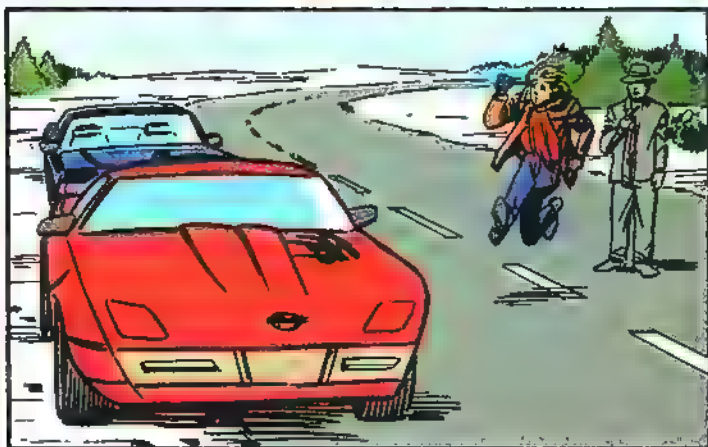
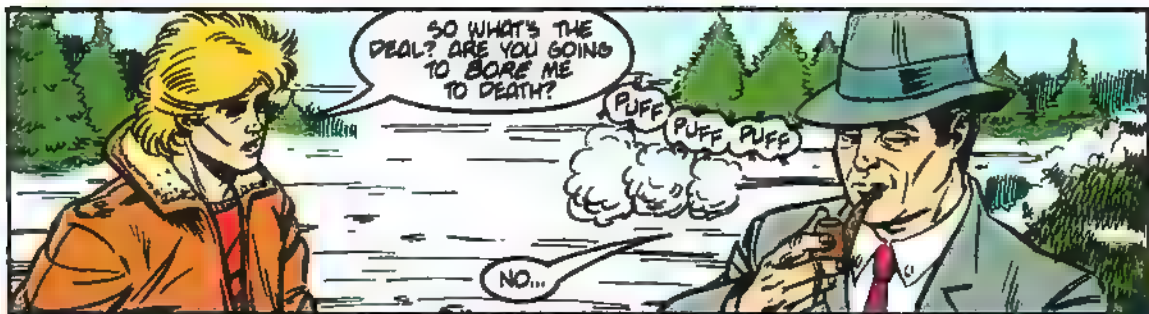
Jon Sable, Freelance #47: Jon's been hired to prevent a murder. But first he has to get past a police S.W.A.T. team and a group of trigger-happy terrorists. By Mike Grell and Mike Manley. Deluxe series.

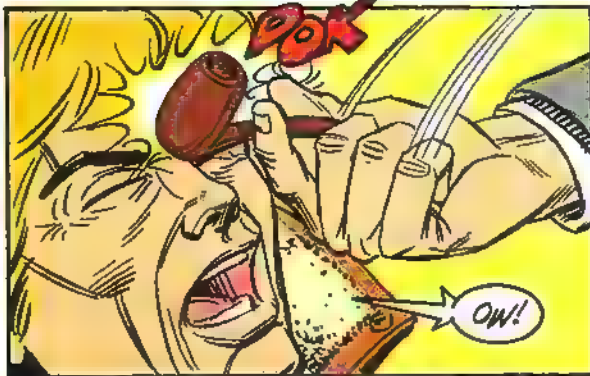
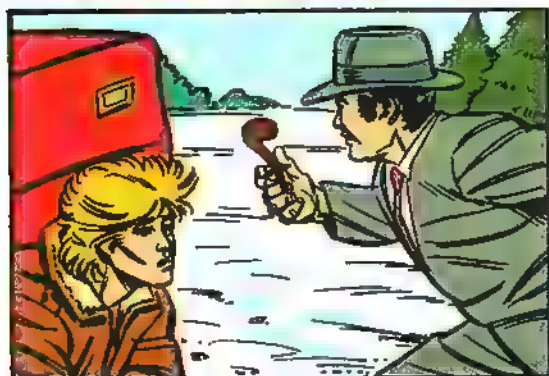
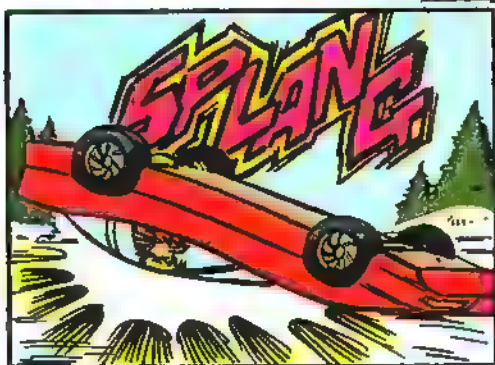
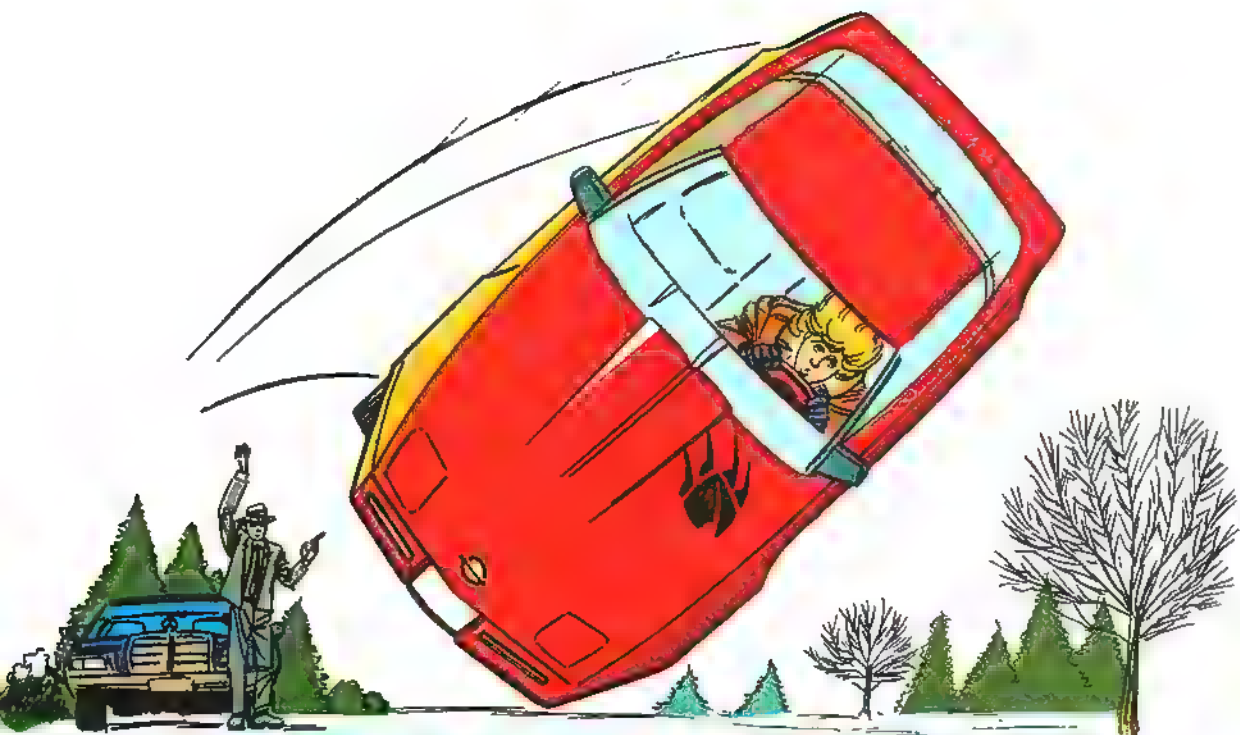
Nexus #32: Special guest artist Jackson Guice joins Mike Baron and John Nyberg as Nexus goes to Procyon to visit his daughters -- and nothing, nothing, will stand in his way! Plus Tales of Judah. Deluxe series.

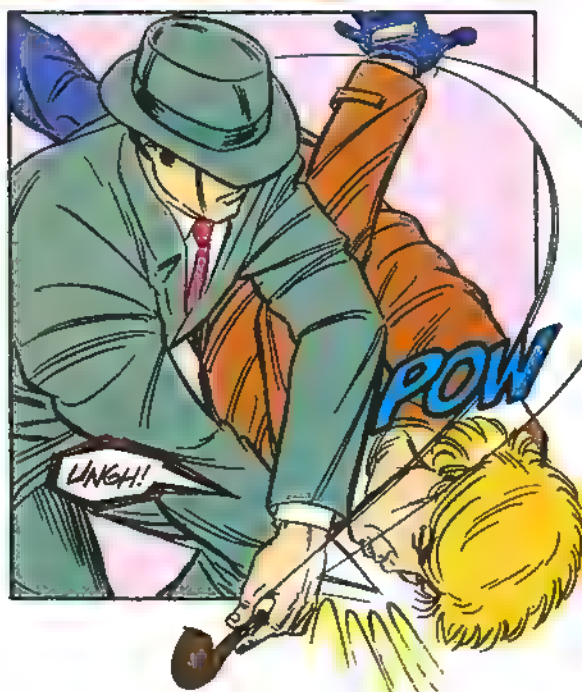
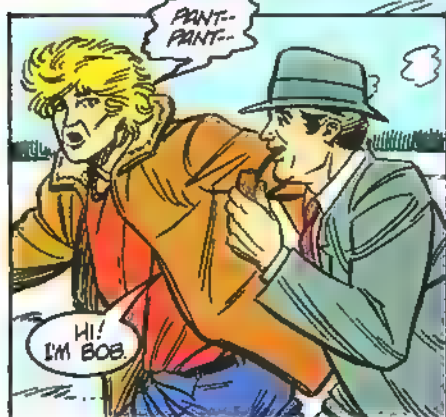
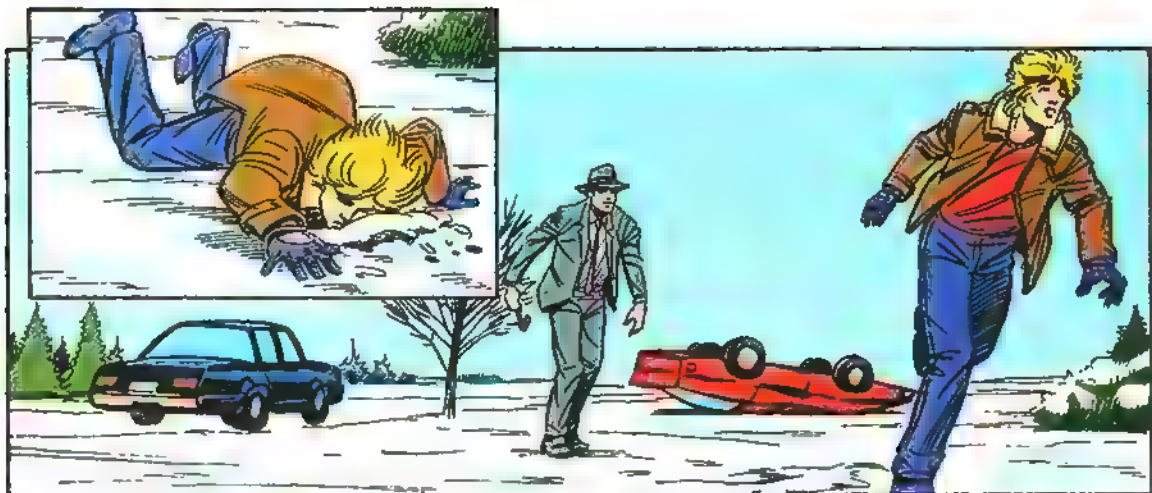


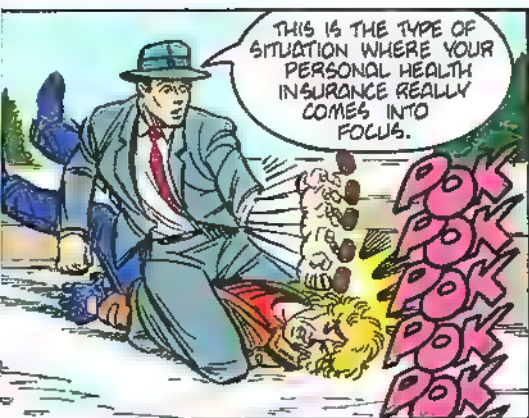




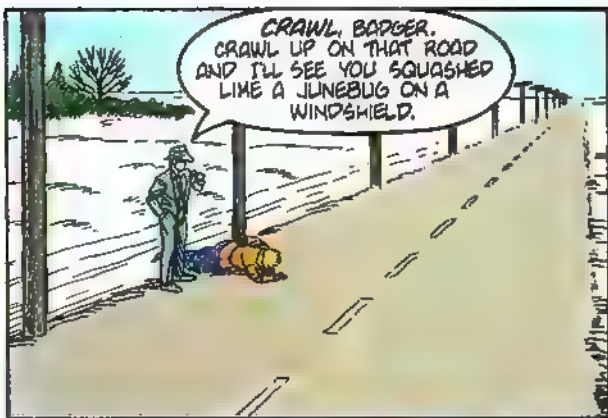




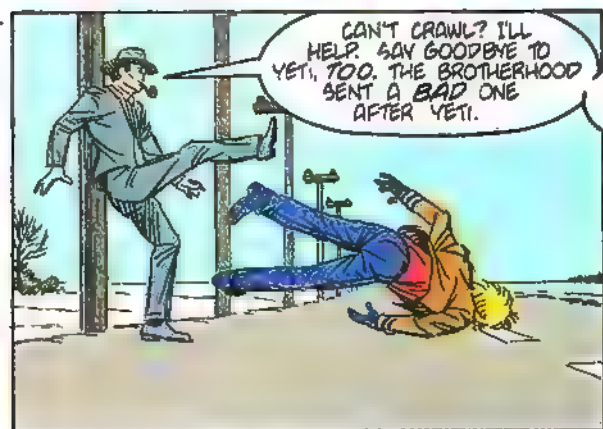




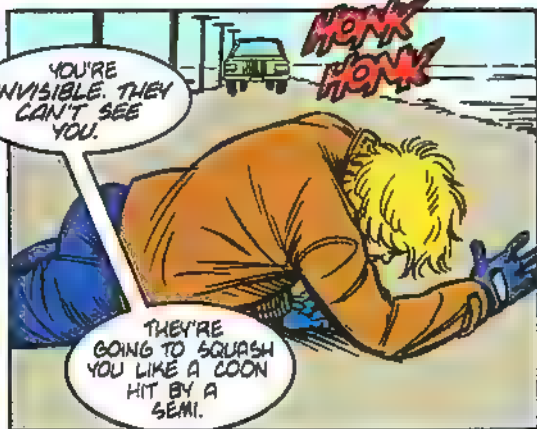
THIS IS THE TYPE OF SITUATION WHERE YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INSURANCE REALLY COMES INTO FOCUS.



CRAWL, BODGER. CRAWL UP ON THAT ROAD AND I'LL SEE YOU SQUASHED LIKE A JUNEBUG ON A WINDSHIELD.

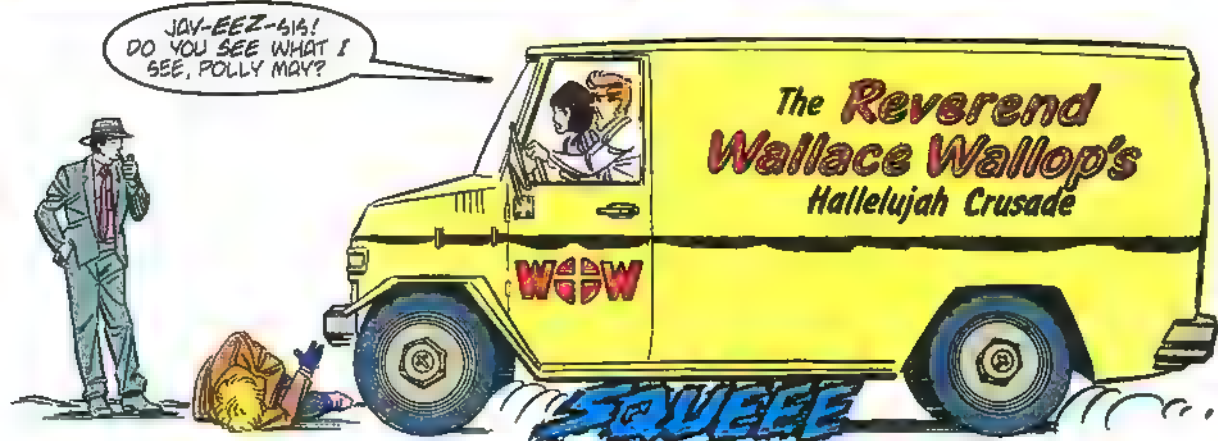


CAN'T CRAWL? I'LL HELP. SAY GOODBYE TO YETI, TOO. THE BROTHERHOOD SENT A BAD ONE AFTER YETI.



YOU'RE INVISIBLE. THEY CAN'T SEE YOU.

THEY'RE GOING TO SQUASH YOU LIKE A COON HIT BY A SEMI.



JAV-EEZ-616! DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE, POLLY MAY?

The Reverend
Wallace Wallop's
Hallelujah Crusade

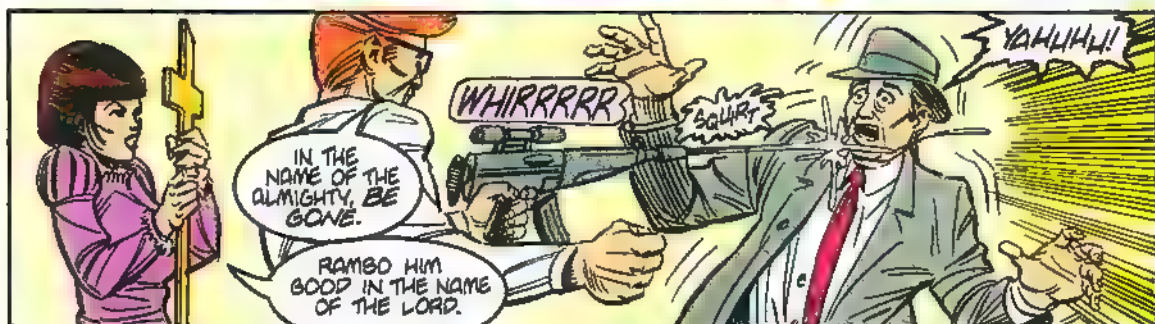
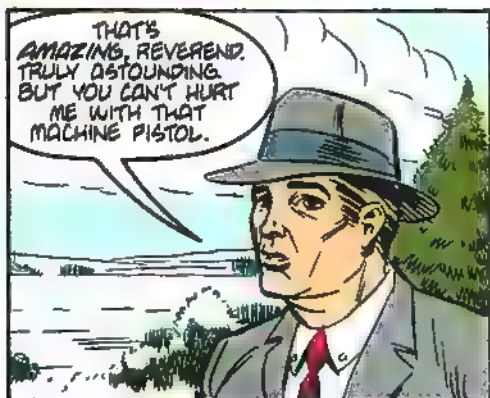
WEDW

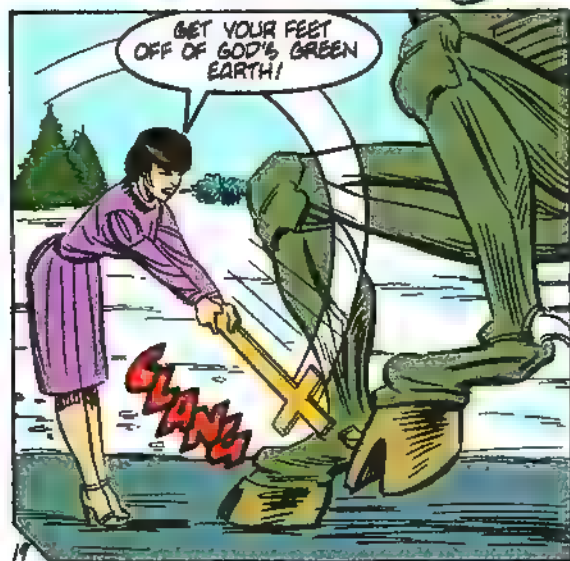
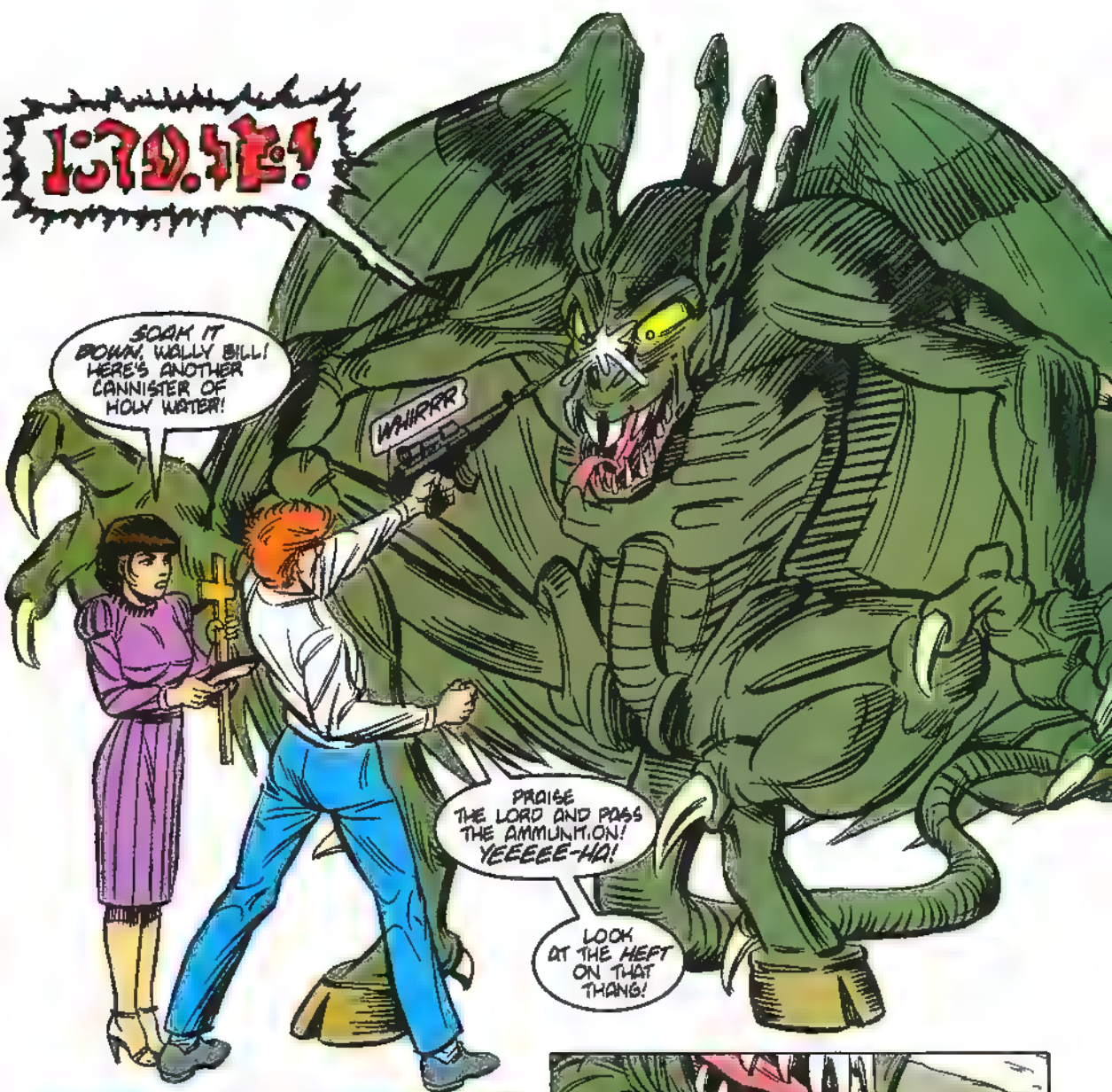
SQUEEE

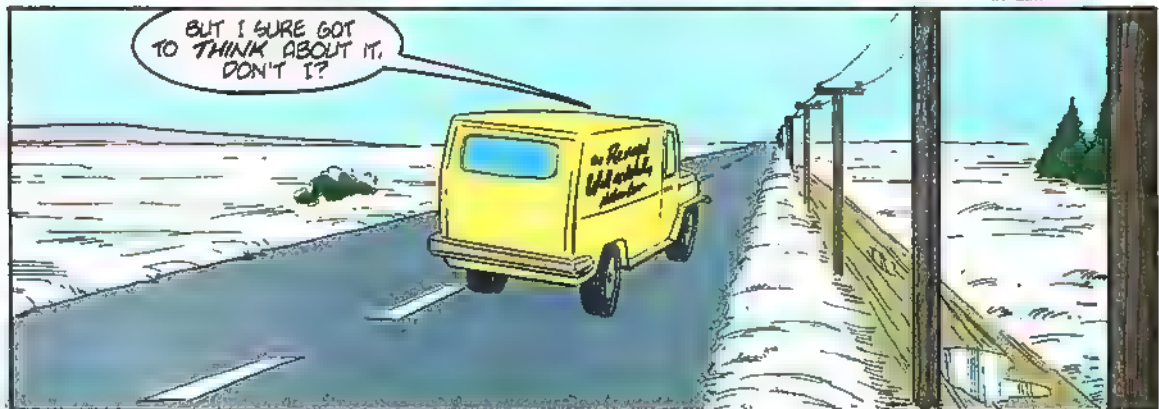
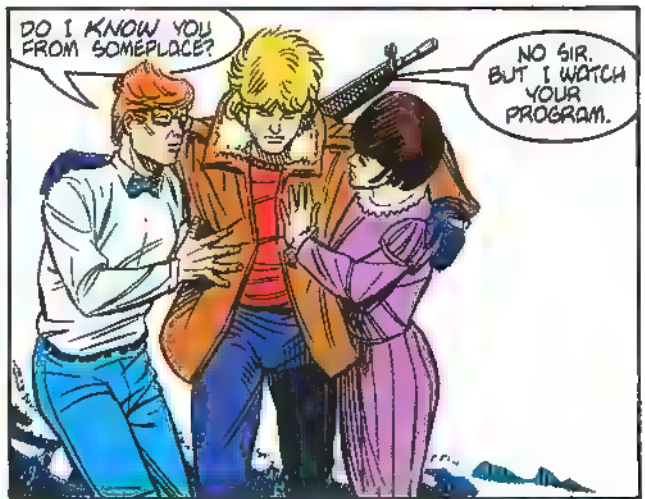
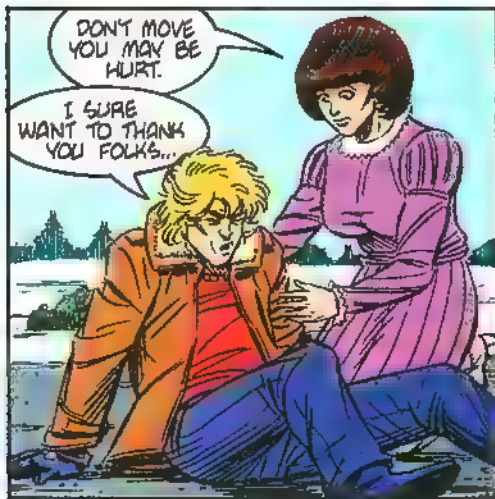
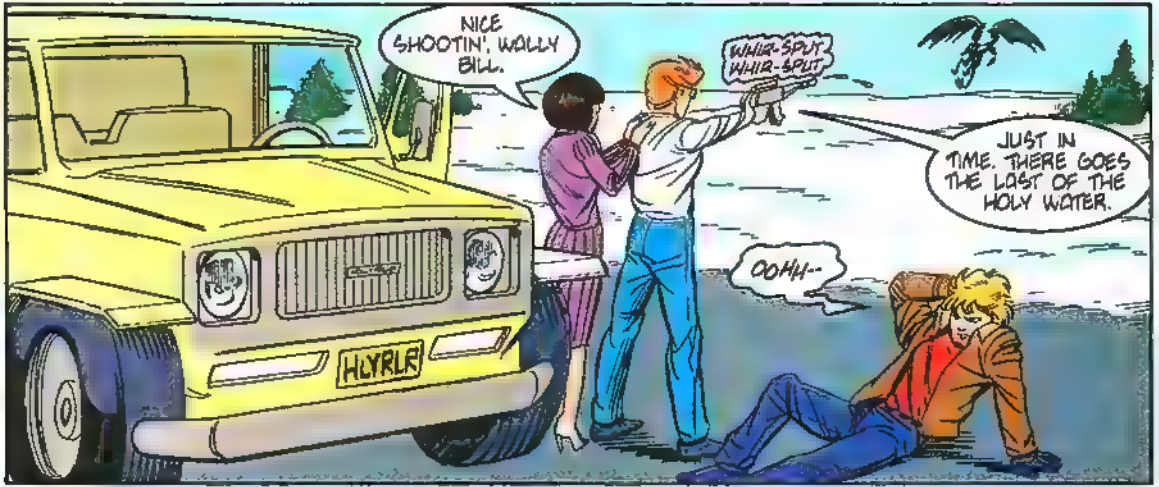


I SURE DO, WALLY BILL! IT'S THE HELLSPAWN OF SATAN, JES' A STANDIN' THERE BOLD AS YOU PLEASE!

TRYIN' TO TRICK US INTO RUNNIN' OVER THAT THERE MAN! WELL, WE GOT A SURPRISE FOR THE HELLSPAWN OF SATAN, DON'T WE, POLLY MAY?







next:
CHEAP SHOT

LADDEEZ AND GENTLEMEN! THINKING CREATURES OF MISCELLANEOUS PERSUASION! WELCOME TO CLONEZONE'S COMEDY CABARET WHERE THE DRINKS ARE CHEAP, BUT THE JOKES CAN GET MIGHTY EXPENSIVE!

AND NOW WITHOUT FURTHER ADD, THAT LOONY LIZ, THAT SUL"AN OF SASS, THAT PIXIE-ISH FRANKSTER--

CLONEZONE
THE HILARIATOR...

THANKS BIG GUY. FIND YOUR CONTACT?

FOLKS, TOO TALL DROPPED A CONTACT LENS. WOULD EVERYONE PLEASE HOLD UP THEIR DESSERT SALCERS AND SEE IF ANY ARE ADJUSTED FOR ASTIGMATISM?

BUT SERIOUSLY, I KID TOO TALL, BUT I COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT HIM IN ADDITION TO SUBBING AS EMCEE, HE'S MY MAKE-UP MAN. AND HE'S THE CRYSTAL BALL IN THE FORTUNE-TELLER SKIT.

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

AS SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW, OUR REGULAR EMCEE, JACQUES THE ANVIL, IS "RAINING WITH JUDAH THE HAMMER FOR THEIR UNIVERSAL HEAVYWEIGHT TAG TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS.

I WON'T WASTE YOUR TIME WITH ANY DEVASTATING REPARTEE--IT WOULD BE UNFAIR TO THE YOUNG COMICS WAITING BACKSTAGE. WE'VE GOT A FRESH CROP TONIGHT!

COLORED GELS
FEDURIEWICZ

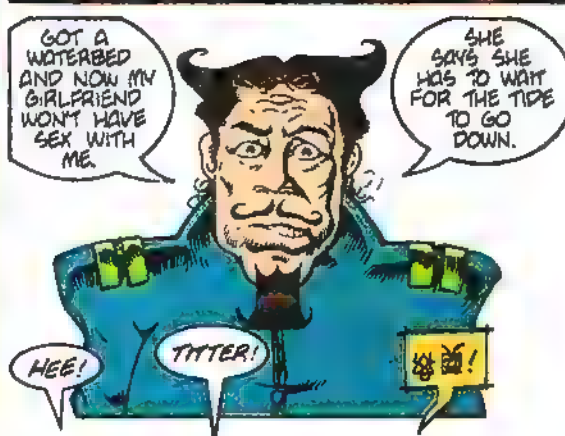
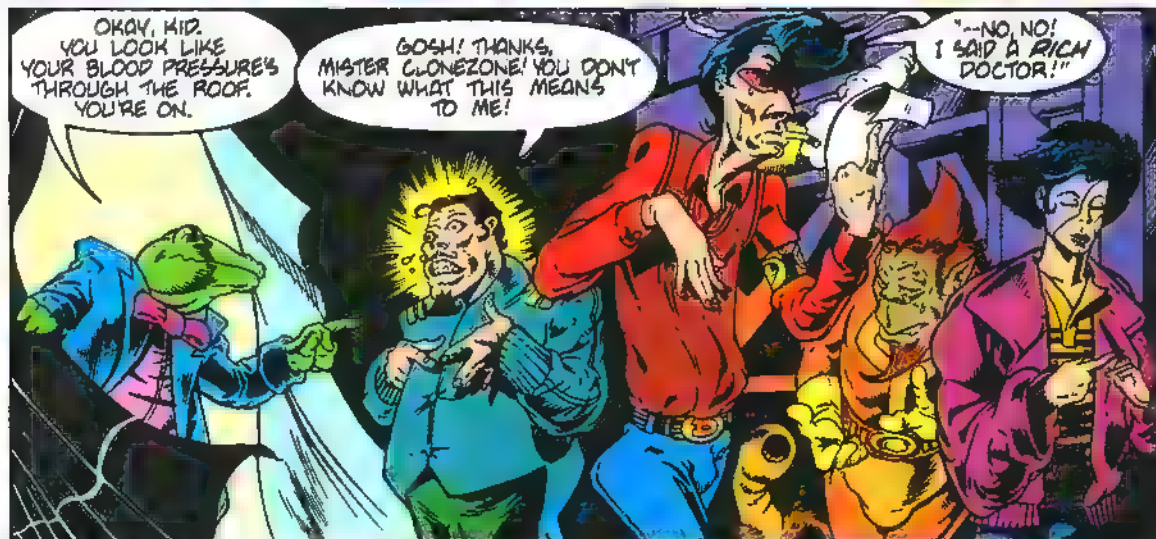
OLIVER
PIES & TOMATOES

CLUB ZONE

BARON
ONE LINERS

NEW! TALENT WITZ

NELSON
INTERIOR DECORE
SCHUBERT
SOUND & GRIP



HEY! I TRIED TO
HITCH FROM RIGEL--ONLY
RIDE WAS A CHAIN OF ORGAN
FREIGHTERS. THEY STUCK
ME IN THE PETER
LORRY...



SO I TRIED TO GET A
TRANSFER TO THE WOMAN'S
CAR, ENDED UP IN COCKPIT
UPHOLSTERY...BUT HEY!
THOSE GUYS WERE SHORT
OF BREADTH!

TRADED A
SATCHEL OF PETERS
FOR A ZOOT LOW-
RIDER...



AND
NOW I--

I...I...I...



SAY, DID
YOU HEAR ABOUT
THAT...



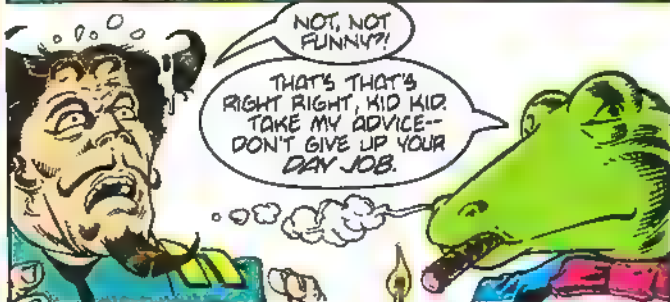
WHAT
HAPPENED?

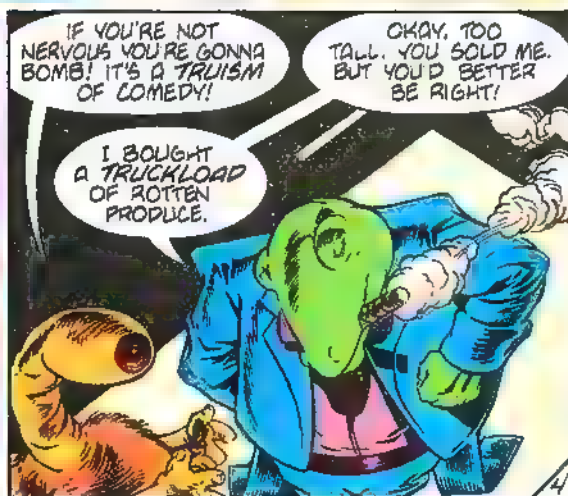
YOU
CROAKED,
KID. YOU
WEREN'T
FUNNY.

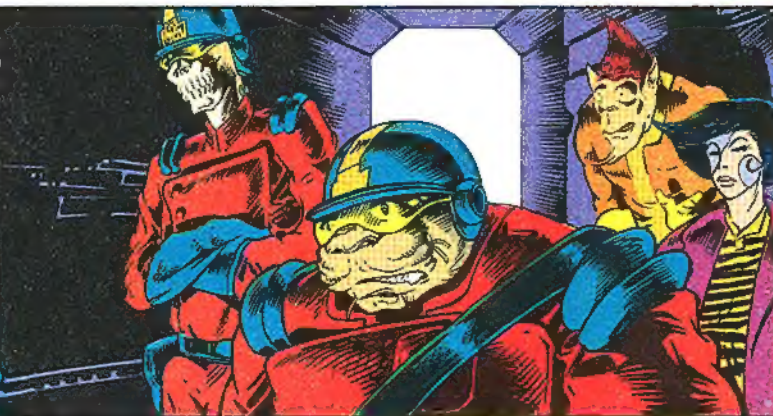
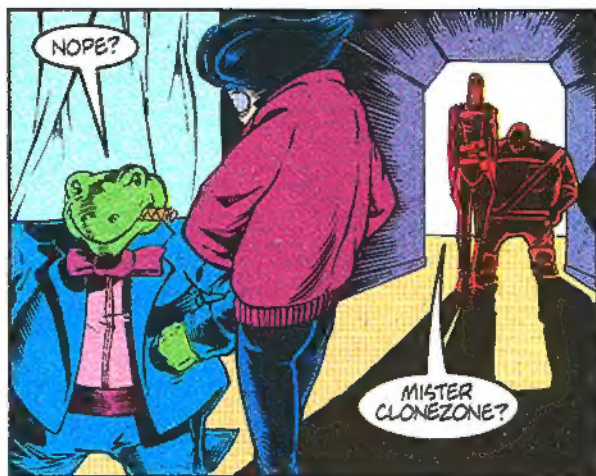


NOT, NOT
FUNNY?

THAT'S THAT'S
RIGHT, KID KID.
TAKE MY ADVICE--
DON'T GIVE UP YOUR
DAY JOB.









A BIG CLONEZONE WELCOME FOR CLAUDIA SWAMPDOG ALL THE WAY FROM NEPTUNE!



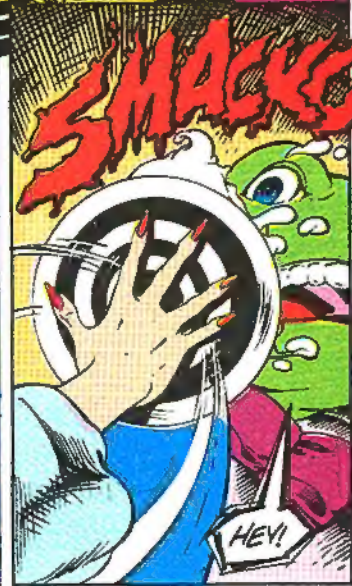
THE BEST THING ABOUT NEPTUNE IS A TERRIFIC VIEW OF URANUS. ALL YOU SINGLE-CELLS IN THE AUDIENCE, YOU KNOW WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOU WANT TO GET IT ON? LET'S SPLIT! REALLY.



HOW DO THEY FIND ROOM FOR THE VID AND THE HOT TUB? YOU KNOW WHAT THEY CALL A BUNCH OF SINGLE-CELLS IN A HOT TUB?

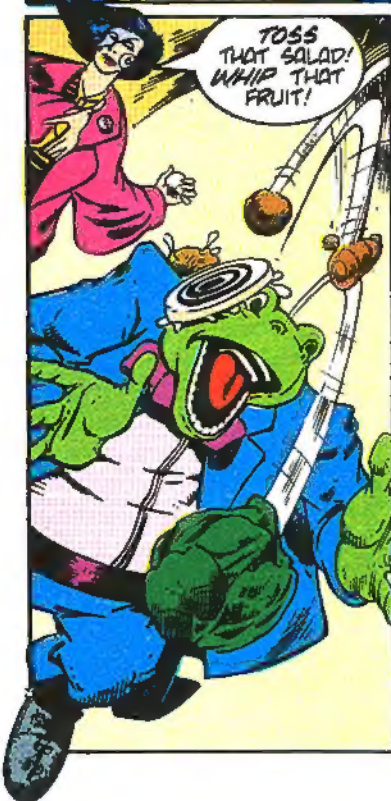


TAPIOCA!



SMACKO

HEY!



TOSS THAT SALAD! WHIP THAT FRUIT!



THAT WAS A BIG ANCHOVY!

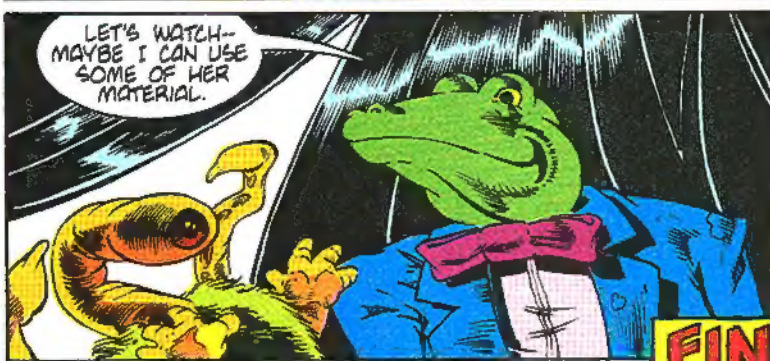
HAAAA HA!

HEE HEE!

HO!

BOSS! I GOOPED!

YEAH, SHE'S A KILLER!



LET'S WATCH-- MAYBE I CAN USE SOME OF HER MATERIAL.

FIN

Dear LARRY,:

% FIRST COMICS

435 N. LASALLE

CHICAGO IL

60610

Badger seems to generate more than its fair share of... *peculiar* letters of comment. Not that we mind -- in fact, it recently dawned on me that many of the whacked out letters are down-right entertaining. So I thought it might be interesting to devote this month's lettercol to some of the more bizarre missives we've received in the past two years. And if you think this is an invitation to write even more outrageous letters, you're right.

Dear Sirs:

Been reading Badger for three issues. A friend recommended it to me when I decided to sample the various alternate comics. Dislike the chauvinism of direct sales formats more than you can imagine but decided since you guys can't really help it I'd give it a try.

First thing I noticed was the *smell* of the paper, which was unique and brought back bitter-sweet memories. When I was six years old, I had a dog named Shaggy who was hit by a car. We rushed her to the vet and he fixed her up, but she had a hairless area of scar tissue from the back of her neck to just behind her front legs. The paper smells very much like that area of scar tissue. Was this an effect you were trying to create for reasons of your own? But despite it, I loved Shaggy anyway. I suppose I should love you too, but you're not Shaggy. The important question, however, is would you *like* to be?

Second thing I noticed was that this book doesn't seem to make very much of what was termed by the Mongols, as they swept through the ancient world creating mayhem and destruc-

tion, as "sense." Doesn't make any sense, no sense, not even the slightest bit of sense. This is the squirreliest goddamn thing I've read in hours. But I'll keep it. It's cute.

Did you know a badger's paw buried under the bed produces lust?

Michael Pickens
61 Leonard Ave.
Centerburg, OH 43011

Dear Mike:

Boyooboy! Are you funny book writers ever touchy! All I did was write a semi-humorous letter to you about how I thought you scripted this book, and the next thing I know, I'm threatened with physical violence! Geez, no wonder you don't have any friends.

Well, I ain't no wimp. I figure if you can't take a joke, then I'd meet you down here at the Old Mill and put you in your place. But I waited and waited, and you never showed up! By the time we were ready to close, everybody was laughing at what a bunch of scared wussies you Madison hippies are! But then, all of a sudden, this badger jumps up on the bar, and he done peed in my drink!

Now I'll bet you thought that was real funny, Baron. But you'll get yours. You see, we're working on some secret experiments up above the bar several nights a week to produce Oconowoc's first superhero. That's right! We know where you live, and soon you'll have to... beware the wrath of the Weasel!

Mark Haden Frazer
W39700 Sunnyfield Dr.
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

Dear Rick:

Perhaps I could help you with a problem that cropped up in the letters page of Badger #11. Readers complained that the woman from issue #9 not only wore her wedding ring on the wrong hand, but the wrong fingers were missing as well. Not true.

To wit: Russians and Russian Orthodox Catholics wear their wedding band on the right hand (as anyone who watched White Nights or Peter the Great can attest). Thus, the woman was probably a Russian Orthodox Catholic. Simple, no? What's that you say, she still wore it on the wrong finger? Trickier answer, but not impossible. From Madeleine L'Engle's Newbery award winning book, *A Wrinkle in Time*, I quote the following, "Again, Mrs. Murry paused... she touched with fingers of her right hand the broad gold band on the third finger of her left hand." Which gives us the wrong hand, but the right finger.

I therefore suggest that the woman in question was not only Russian Orthodox, but wore her wedding band on the third finger of her right hand for the same reason that Mrs. Murry wore hers on the third finger of her left hand. See, I told you the answer was simple. However (you knew this was coming, didn't you?), it appears as if the woman is not even wearing a wedding band. That minor detail I'll leave for you to explain. After all, I've figured out the hard part.

Perhaps you could send me a No-Prize or something for help - ing you out. Oh, not a good idea, eh? Then how about a Yes-Prize, or even a Know-Prize?



Wait, even better, there's this weasel-slug I know. I'll mail his address to the Badger, and he could...

Robert J. Sodaro
P.O. Box 1081
Fairfield, CT 06432

Dear Larry:

I would first like to say that Badger is a great comic. It is one of the comics which can be put into its own category. Badger is unique. Badger is fun. Badger is chaotic. Badger is...

Wait:

Before I go on with the glory, let me explain first of all why I am giving you guys the burden of this letter. The Badger is losing his edge. That's right! Could you guys please inform Mike Baron that he is slowly making the Badger more sane? The first five or six issues of the comic are classics, mainly because the Badger was an unstable character. Also, my friends quit reading Badger because it started to get boring. Please, Mike, and whoever else there is to plead to, please make Badger psycho again!

Kevin Miguel
P.O. Box 298
Wailuku, Maui, HI 96793

Dear Larry:

I protest whole-heartedly the story in #13. It was gross, violent, and full of godless, immoral values. Witness:

1) Schizophrenia is presented as an advantage.

2) The existence of a pagan god.

3) The use of witchcraft.

4) Badger tries to strangle a friend. A woman, no less!

5) Bloody pagan rituals and sacrifices.

6) Conversations with animals.

7) Badger throws a dinner party, with a house guest as the main course.

8) Excessive drinking and disorderliness.

9) Evolution is presented as fact, in the forms of intelligent, talking reptiles and apes (who participate in the excessive drinking and disorderliness).

10) Serving liquor to a minor. (Very minor, by 500 years)

11) Another dinner party for Badger's friends, where he provides another house guest as the main course. This really gets my goose. Remind me not to accept an invitation from this guy.

I'm sure you can understand why good, God-fearing, born-again Christians would be upset about a comic like this, which is accessible to impressionable children -- and impressionable adults.

The reason I'm upset, however, is that I never have that much fun!

David Alan Wright
39 Howard St.
New Britain, CT 06051

Dear Larry:

The Badger "overcame gravity with his internal power?" By golly, does this mean that the Badger is... gasp... a MUTANT? Then again, that would explain his power to move his eyes to different sides of his head.

Jerry Smith
2631 Bethlehem Ln.
Hebron, KY 41048

Badger:

Don't be tellin' no people to be throwin' their trash in Michigan or I kick yo' ass!

Booger
413 Draper Hall
Western Michigan Univ.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Dear Editor:

I've decided that Badger should cross-over with Batman and Robin and acquire a kid sidekick called the Fieldmouse or the Chipmunk. Really! Seriously. And Badger should wear a cape. And carry Badgerangs.

Prairie Dog



NEXT MONTH: Bill Reinhold returns and joins Mike Baron for "Cheap Shot." Plus Clone-zone by Baron and Mark A. Nelson.

-- Rick Oliver